**Muchin College Prep Long Essay Writing Guidelines**

**Basic Overview:**

Maximum Possible Points: 6

1. **Thesis (0-1)-** **HTSs: Argumentation and Targeted Skill**

Your thesis MUST directly address ALL PARTS of the question. It must also do more than simply restate the question asked. Be explicit and indicate a specific position that the paper will argue. It also goes without saying, but your thesis MUST be historically accurate.

1. **Support for Argument (0-2)- HTSs: Use of Evidence, Argumentation**

Focus on the use of evidence and argumentation or analysis.

* 1. **Evidence (1)-** Support your stated thesis (or make a relevant argument) using specific evidence.
  2. **Evidence and Linkages to Thesis or Argument (Analysis) (2)-** Support your stated thesis (or make a relevant argument) using specific evidence, clearly and consistently stating how the evidence supports the thesis or argument, and establishing clear linkages between the evidence and the thesis or argument. **(How and why?)**

1. **Application of Targeted Historical Thinking Skill (0-2)- HTSs: Targeted Skill** 
   1. **Continuity and Change Over Time- Note: MUST** do both or “zero” points
      1. Describe historical continuity AND change over time
      2. Describe historical continuity AND change over time, and ANALYZE specific examples that illustrate historical continuity AND change over time
   2. **Comparison-**
      1. Describe similarities AND differences among historical developments
      2. Describe similarities AND differences among historical developments, providing specific examples, and ANALYZE the reasons for their similarities and/or differences OR, DEPENDING ON THE PROMPT, evaluate the relative significance of the historical developments
   3. **Causation-**
      1. Describe causes AND/OR effects of a historical development
      2. Describe causes AND/OR effects of a historical development and ANALYZE specific examples that illustrate causes AND/OR effects of a historical development
   4. **Periodization-**
      1. Describe the ways in which the historical development specified in the prompt was different from OR similar to developments that preceded and/or followed
      2. ANALYZE the extent to which the historical development specified in the prompt was different from AND similar to developments that preceded and/or followed, providing specific examples to illustrate the analysis
2. **Synthesis (0-1)- HTS: Synthesis**

Your response must synthesize the argument, evidence, and context into a coherent and persuasive essay by accomplishing one or more of the following as relevant to the question:

* 1. **Additional Category-** Explicitly employ an additional appropriate category of analysis (e.g., political, economic, social, cultural, geographical, race/ethnic, gender) beyond that called for in the prompt AND include some historical evidence; or
  2. **Connections-** Appropriately connect the topic of the question to other historical periods, geographical areas, contexts, or circumstances.

**Tips on Writing a “6” Essay:**

* + - 1. From the start, you must make sure you understand exactly what the prompt is asking you. It may be helpful to re-write the prompt in your own words. You need to directly answer the prompt in its entirety. Avoid being non-responsive or answering the question you wish you had been asked instead of what is actually being asked of you. Below are common prompts:
         1. **Analyze/Evaluate:** Judge the value or character of something; give the positive and negative points; focus on HOW and WHY
         2. **To what extent:** For these questions, it is best to select an extreme and leave room for exceptions. Use modifiers.
         3. **Relative Importance/Significance:** Rank the factors given
         4. **Support, Modify, or Refute**: Defend, qualify, or challenge a given position with the use of historical evidence.
         5. **Continuity and Change Over Time**: Focus on how historical themes, concepts, developments, processes and events have remained the same AND transformed across time period.
         6. **Compare and Contrast**: Examine and note similarities and differences
         7. **Causation**: Reason(s) why events happened and their effects (both short and long term)
         8. **Periodization**: The process of dividing history into distinct eras after considering various factors and correctly identifying key events which became significant turning points to separate periods of history.
         9. **Interpretatio**n: Actively thinking about, evaluating and assessing historical evidence, including both primary and secondary sources
      2. For your introduction, follow these simple guidelines. Start with a short introduction that includes historical context (connects to broader historical events and/or processes) to lay a foundation. This is not part of the long essay rubric, but it will help give shape to your paper and show how much you know about the topic. Then state your argument in a thesis statement that takes a position, fully addresses the entire question and establishes organizational categories. Do NOT simply repeat or paraphrase the question!
      3. For significant relevant evidence, be sure to use key terms including people, events and ideas covered throughout class and in your readings. Do not simply mention or describe information, use it strategically to support and prove your thesis. Explain how and why the evidence supports your point of view. Do not simply “name drop” without any explanation, it will negate any evidence you incorporate as useless.
      4. Do not throw away your spelling, grammar or hand writing simply because this is a paper focused on history. These errors detract from your overall argument and distract the reader.
         1. Use only third person.
         2. Use only past tense
         3. DO NOT attempt to make your essay relevant to today’s world unless the question asks for it.
         4. Avoid starting sentences with pronouns and DO NOT use contractions.
         5. Never be informal in your essay or write the way you speak.
         6. Be confident in your writing- NO ‘maybe’, ‘possibly’, etc.
      5. Budget your time! The best papers are those which the writer took the time to outline their essay first. Having a well-organized paper helps add a level of sophistication and clarity that will help strengthen your overall argument.

**Outline for Long Essays:**

1. **Introduction**
   1. **Background information** to lay a foundation and provide **historical context** to other events and/or processes
   2. **Thesis Statement (your argument)**
      1. Take a position
      2. Answer the ENTIRE question
      3. Give categories for analysis:
         1. Given
         2. Own
         3. SPRITE/PERSIA, etc.
2. **1st Body Paragraph:**
   1. **Topic sentence** introducing the most important category to be discussed **and** relating it to the question asked
   2. **Relevant Evidence:** Use at least 3 pieces of significant relevant evidence with interpretive commentary (i.e. how and why it is important) to support assertions
   3. **Concluding sentence** wrapping up the paragraph and relating it back to the thesis and transitioning to the new category
3. **2nd Body Paragraph:**
   1. Repeat the steps above: **Note- Transition** may go here instead of in the **concluding sentence** from the paragraph above
4. **3rd Body Paragraph:**
   1. Repeat the steps above
5. **4th Body Paragraph:**
   1. Repeat the steps above
6. **Synthesis-** Although it does NOT have to be a separate paragraph, remember to bring up: 
   * 1. **Counter**-**Argument-**
     2. **Additional Category-**
     3. **Connections-**
7. **Conclusion:**
   1. Summarize all the paragraphs from above with a sentence for each
   2. **Do not** add new or irrelevant information and avoid contradicting yourself

**Note-** The number of body paragraphs will vary depending on the question and categories. Do **NOT** buy into preconceived notions of a 5 paragraph essay.